

SPR

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

**WAUKESHA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
PEWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
One-Stop Profile**

March 1996

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During December 1995

WAUKESHA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER One-Stop Profile

CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT	1
ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE	3
COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION	6
FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES	7
DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE	8
Evolution and General Description of Local Design	8
Universal Access	9
Customer Choice	9
Integrated Services	10
Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based	11
Physical Facilities	12
IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS	13
Staffing Arrangements	13
Capacity Building.....	13
Management Information Systems (MIS)	14
Labor Market Information and Related Improvements	15
Marketing.....	16
DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS.....	17
Services for Individual Customers	17
Services for Employer Customers	19
CUSTOMER RESPONSE.....	20
Individuals	20
Employers	22
INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN	22
ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED	23

WAUKESHA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Waukesha County Workforce Development Center (“WDC” or “Center”) opened its doors in January 1995, after an intensive two-year planning process. The Center is located on the campus of the Waukesha County Technical College in the city of Pewaukee. Waukesha County is part of a three-county One-Stop planning unit called the “WOW” SDA because it is comprised of three counties: Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington. Each of the three counties has a local One-Stop center. Waukesha County is the largest of the three counties, with several population centers and a range of suburban, urban, and rural areas.

Key partner agencies, each representing major funding streams, had been working collaboratively for several years prior to the opening of the Center. JTPA/Title III experiences were credited as providing the opportunity for some of the initial forays into coordinated service delivery (e.g., through rapid response teams that included participation from a number of different local agencies). What has emerged as the Workforce Development Center is the product of several years of discussions among key staff from the participating local partners, including the Wisconsin Job Service, the WOW Private Industry Council, the Waukesha County Technical College, the Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services, the Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation, and Partners for Education, Inc. The active involvement of the County Executive is also credited with providing the leadership that helped the participating partners see beyond their individual concerns to a common mission and customer service approach.

The vision of the Workforce Development Center is believed to be inherent in its name. Although most local One-Stop sites within the state of Wisconsin call themselves “Job Centers,” partner agencies in Waukesha County prefer this designation, perceived to be indicative of a more comprehensive view, as enumerated in its mission statement:

*The purpose of the Workforce Development Center is to
advance the economic well-being of the region by developing*

and maintaining a quality workforce and by serving as the focal point for local and regional workforce development initiatives. This is to be achieved through the co-location and integration of employment, training, education, and economic development services for job seekers, workers and employers.

Waukesha County is the fastest growing county in the state of Wisconsin, experiencing one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation, as well as fiercely swift business expansion. Due to this rapid economic growth, employers are projected to have a continuing problem with an adequate supply of entry-level and skilled workers. Indeed, local fast-food establishments have offered health benefits in order to attract workers. This economic environment offers many opportunities for partner agencies (e.g., employer interest in and support for workforce development activities), as well as challenges (e.g., the lack of a public transportation system to support access to county jobs by workers from the central city of Milwaukee).

In addition to the local economy, the state's proposed realignment of SDA boundaries from 17 to possibly 10 is a key contextual variable offering both challenge and opportunity. Local One-Stop actors believe that the proposed realignment of planning units will transform the current three-county SDA into a four-county SDA that would include neighboring Milwaukee. There is some concern that Milwaukee, which is much larger and more economically and socially diverse, will overshadow the three counties that currently comprise the WOW SDA. Thus, although it is recognized that Milwaukee offers many advantages to Waukesha County (e.g., source of labor), and that coordinated efforts are in the best interests of both counties (e.g., realizing the potential for creating an integrated labor market by linking Milwaukee's surplus of job seekers with WOW's surplus of unfilled jobs), there is some tension around consolidating the local workforce planning unit with Milwaukee County.

The prospective block-granting of federal workforce development programs continues to influence local progress toward a fully integrated service delivery system. Local actors actually believed that block grants would have been in place by this time, facilitating movement toward their vision of the Workforce Development Center as a *business*, with each of the partner agencies as "departments" within a company. However, the current reality of different funding streams with different restrictions and requirements is perceived as mitigating against the achievement of true integration and

the ultimate realization of the local vision, concerns that were echoed by state-level representatives as well.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

As required by the state, the Workforce Development Center has a *Local Collaborative Planning Team* (LCPT) guiding One-Stop planning and implementation, similar in structure and function to the State Collaborative Planning Team. Membership on the LCPT consists of the four state-required “core” partner agencies — the local Job Service, JTPA PIC, JOBS administrative entity, and the local Technical College. The LCPT has responsibility over the entire three-county SDA, of which Waukesha is a part. Partner agencies believe that the LCPT represents a true partnership between agencies focused on the common mission of workforce development.

The state’s planned framework for local Job Center governance revolves around the establishment of local *Human Resource Investment Boards* (HRIBs). This proposed structure has emerged as a politically-charged issue, perhaps because these local governing bodies are being planned *after* the establishment of the LCPT and the actual development of local centers such as the WDC. Representatives from local partner agencies are vehemently opposed to what is perceived as the imposition of another layer of government and bureaucracy and are concerned with the potential destabilizing effect this mandated structure may have on the current collaborative process that has emerged and evolved and that partners believe has worked exceptionally well. Currently, the state’s plans for the establishment of HRIBs have been postponed until late spring 1996 (or after the passage of federal block grant legislation).

Currently, the day-to-day operation of the WDC is overseen by a *Management Team* consisting of top-level representatives from six of the key partner agencies (listed below). It was established nearly two years prior to the opening of the WDC to enable key players to negotiate the mechanics of a workforce development center that was to be based on customers and founded on agency partnerships. The Management Team is currently responsible for the ongoing operation of the Center, with decisions made on a consensus basis. By all accounts, this is a highly effective team. It is not surprising that this administrative arrangement is perceived by local actors to be a key part of the

local governance structure. Indeed, local actors believe that the Management Team at the WDC functions as an HRIB, although it is currently not an incorporated entity.

Although there is no “lead agency” responsible for managing the Workforce Development Center, joint Center funds (provided for in the lease payments made by each participating partner) are used to support a full-time Center Manager and portions of the salaries of other staff, whose efforts support the operation of the Center as an entity. The Center Manager, who had only been in her position for a short period prior to the site visit, views her role as facilitating and urging Center partners toward increasing unification and consolidation of their functions over time. As she described it, “The Center partners have “gotten married.” It’s my job to help them realize what comes after the wedding to build and maintain a strong marriage.”

There are nine local agency partners currently involved in the Workforce Development Center as listed below. Each has a physical presence at the Center.¹

- *Wisconsin Job Service*, which provides ES services to the general public, including UI claimants.
- *WOW Private Industry Council*, which is responsible for administering services under JTPA Title II and Title III, which it provides through contracts to several service providers, who are also co-located at the Center.
- *Waukesha County Department of Health & Human Services*, which has located not only its contractors for the JOBS program for AFDC recipients and the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program at the Center, but also the entire county income maintenance staff that provide economic assistance to “able-bodied” county residents.
- *Waukesha County Technical College*, which provides a wide range of education and occupational training programs to students, assessment services and career exploration to individual WDC customers through an on-site Community Career Center, as well as customized training services to local employers.
- *Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation*, which is a private non-profit organization focused on attracting and retaining companies in the county.

¹The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, although not part of the initial planning process, is slated to come on board as an additional co-located partner agency.

- *Partners for Education, Inc.*, which is a private non-profit organization created by local school districts with the objective of developing and cultivating linkages between K-12 education and local businesses.

The following three partner agencies are contracted to provide specialized services to targeted populations:

- *Kaiser Group, Inc.* is a private for-profit contractor providing case management and customer services to targeted populations (JTPA, JOBS and FSE&T). This provider was selected through a competitive RFP issued jointly by the PIC and the County Department of Health and Human Services for the JTPA, JOBS, and FSE&T programs.
- *LaCasa de Esperanza* is a CBO that works with non-English speaking customers, offering a variety of case management and customer services to targeted populations. This provider was also selected through a joint RFP process.
- *AFL-CIO* is contracted to provide specialized services to dislocated workers.

In summary, the partnership developed for the Waukesha Workforce Development Center is distinguished by: (1) the consensus-oriented model for Center management and the lack of any designated lead agency; (2) the strong lead role played by the local Economic Development Corporation in unifying outreach to and encouraging active participation by local employers; (3) a strong local emphasis on the importance of involving the K-12 schools in efforts to provide a well-trained workforce for the future; and (4) the integration of the economic assistance function within the Center while avoiding a “welfare” mentality or image and emphasizing employment for customers as the mission that unifies all project partners.

As stated in a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed by the partner agencies nearly two years before the facility was operational, each agency agreed to take the lead on a different specialized function within the Center. This agreement has fostered a sense of cohesion and partnership, while acknowledging and capitalizing on specific expertise and minimizing duplicative efforts. For instance, the Job Service agreed to take the lead on staffing the self-service job information, the reception area, and the “job order services” unit. The PIC agreed to take the lead on a variety of administrative services, including the development of common computer information systems. The PIC also acts as the fiscal agent for the local One-Stop implementation grant. The Waukesha County Technical College agreed to take the lead on facilities

management as well as the provision of career assessment services. The County Department of Health and Human Services was the obvious agency to lead the coordination of services to able-bodied public assistance recipients. Likewise, the Economic Development Corporation naturally was the agency to coordinate business development services to county firms.

As a result of this agreement, partner agencies perceive collaborative efforts to build on the strengths of each agency and to naturally “feed off of each other.” This spirit of collaboration and cooperation has perhaps been fostered by the lengthy period of negotiation and detailed planning that involved all levels of staff from the partner agencies and that took place *before* co-location actually occurred. The opening of the Center represented the achievement of a common goal, despite differing agency cultures, missions and perspectives.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Formal communication and coordination mechanisms in place at the Workforce Development Center include a variety of multi-agency committees, workgroups and teams, each with responsibility for specific areas and functions, and each open to all levels of partner agency staff (with the exception of the Management Team). For instance, the Integrated Services to Job Seekers Committee is concerned with issues and challenges regarding services to individual customers. Similarly, the Integrated Services to Employers Steering Committee is concerned with services to employer customers. In most cases, each of the Center’s committees and teams were established one or two years *before* the Center was opened. Therefore, these formal mechanisms not only enhanced communication and coordination, but allowed partner agency staff to build trust and experience working together as a team. In addition, because the issues and challenges that were originally faced by the various groups have necessarily changed and evolved, so have the responsibilities of each of the teams. For instance, the Building Environment Committee, originally established to decide on such matters as color schemes and furnishings, has evolved into the Building Operations Committee, now charged with the responsibility of ensuring a comfortable work environment within the Center.

In addition, the co-location of staff from numerous agencies, by its very nature, enhances communication. This was, in fact, a primary reason why initial plans for a center placed co-location at a premium. The belief that there is no substitute for face-

to-face interaction was echoed repeatedly by all levels of partner agency staff. Case managers, for instance, believed that the ability to “walk over” to someone from a different agency enabled them to be more responsive to customer needs. Heads of local agency partners, who might have been located “a few miles” from other partner agencies before the Center was built, expressed the tremendous difference co-location has had on the efficiency and effectiveness of their organization. To support their physical proximity, one of the first tasks the Center workgroup on MIS undertook was to develop common automated systems for the exchange of electronic mail and sharing of individual staff schedules and conference room schedules among all Center staff, regardless of specific agency affiliation.

Other mechanisms and procedures to enhance communication and coordination across local agency partners include the cross-training of staff in various areas (e.g., information technology) regularly scheduled inter-agency meetings, and a monthly WDC newsletter that gives all Center staff information on activities that have taken place or plans for the near future.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

The Workforce Development Center was built with funds from the county and the local Technical College, demonstrating the commitment of key partner agencies to the One-Stop concept, which included co-location as a basic premise. The total cost of the new facility was \$2.3M. Because different agency rules and requirements precluded building ownership by any of the contributing partners, and because all partner agencies wanted to be “equal” in the building (with no specific partner owning it), it was determined during initial planning stages that each partner agency would hold separate leases with a “neutral” owner. The Technical College Foundation Board was chosen to have “ownership without risk and without return.”²

Aside from the lease agreement to which each participating partner makes a monthly contribution that supports the costs of operating the shared physical facility and the Center Manager position, the Center has few joint sources of funding. Exceptions include the local One-Stop implementation grant provided through the State to support local One-Stop implementation progress and a One-Stop Local Learning

² The Waukesha County Technical College, which is a key local partner, is a separate entity from the Technical College Foundation.

Laboratory grant (which is shared by both the WOW and Milwaukee SDAs). The JTPA Private Industry Council has responsibility for all funds coming through the Center and is the fiscal agent for the local One-Stop grant.³

Notwithstanding these joint funding sources, there are five major federal workforce development funding streams represented by the Center partners: Wagner-Peyser, JOBS, JTPA, Adult Basic Education, and Carl Perkins. A number of the project partners also manage activities involving additional federal, state, or local funding streams (for example, the Technical College operates extensive educational, technical training, and business assistance programs beyond its role as the local agency responsible for Adult Basic Education and Carl Perkins funding). At the present time, each partner agency maintains its own budget. There are currently no written financial agreements between the partners.

From a fiscal perspective, the Center operates like nine different companies — each with its own lease and its own budget. In general, the partner agencies contract with one another for specific services. Few costs are *Center* costs. Therefore, it is difficult to discern the exact overall costs involved in maintaining the Center. Although this is contrary to the local One-Stop vision, which is predicated in part upon the Center operating as *one business* with nine different departments, the integration of funding at the level of service delivery in the current multi-program environment is not perceived as prudent or realistic. Therefore, although partner agencies clearly coordinate in terms of the planning and delivery of specific services (e.g., workshops), partner agency funds are not co-mingled.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

As previously described, general principles guiding the design of the Workforce Development Center included co-location, equal partnership, complementarity of partner agency roles, and the decision to promote the *functional integration* of staff from a variety of agency partners. Rather than viewing the Center in terms of the program priorities of the individual partners, which vary in terms of target populations

³ At the time of this writing, the local One-Stop grant expenditure rate for the WOW SDA was approximately 60%, with the expenditure rate in Waukesha County reportedly higher due chiefly to the cost of new equipment.

and available services, the new Center vision depends on viewing the needs of the customers as the starting point, and enabling individual customers to navigate the multi-agency system to access comprehensive services responsive to their needs.

The One-Stop vision promoted by the Center Manager consists of coordinating existing services to meet customer needs, or as she expressed it, “wrapping the services around the customer.” Customer-responsive service design and delivery are intended to go several steps beyond coordination of existing services to include the coordinated development and implementation of new workforce development services to meet identified service gaps. For example, the Center Manager was very enthusiastic about the progress made by Center partners as a group to address the need expressed by local businesses for a pool of qualified apprenticeship applicants.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

The Workforce Development Center is conveniently located on the Technical College campus, which is near a major interstate and served by public transportation. According to the local design framework, the Center itself is the place of activity, although some services might be accessed off-site (e.g., classroom training at the Technical College). Whereas unstaffed access points are planned for the future, they are currently not a part of local design due primarily to cost considerations. The vision is that the Workforce Development Center will be the “hub of the wheel, with kiosks being the spokes.”

Local One-Stop actors expect the Center to be viewed as a professional entity dedicated to comprehensive, high-quality workforce development needs for all individuals and employers, rather than as a “human services agency” that portrays a “welfare image.” Indeed, this stance was one of the catalysts for including Economic Development as a key partner.

However, one challenge with which project partners are grappling with respect to achieving the federal objective of *Universality* is how to make a broad range of services available to the general public, given that a number of the federal funding streams managed by project partners are targeted to specific groups. Although all One-Stop customers can access services such as JobNet and Career Visions and can obtain career assessment services, more intensive services are often reserved for individuals eligible for categorical programs. One response to this challenge has been the exploration of

fee-based services. Another has been to share information when there is unused space available in various workshops and sessions offered by a given agency.

Customer Choice

Local respondents generally agreed that technology-driven user-directed services such as automated job banks (*JobNet*) and career information software (*Career Visions*) are important strategies to make services available to large numbers of customers. Both databases can be accessed in person (evening and weekend hours are available) or by personal computer. However, local respondents do not perceive self-service automated information systems as the only means by which the local One-Stop Center is responsive to individual and employer needs. Rather, “personal” services provided by staff were also considered crucial. Several case managers and customers described the “key feature” of responsive services as guiding the customer through the system and helping to enhance customer self-esteem by treating all customers with respect and offering them encouragement to pursue their employment goals.

Integrated Services

Integration of services at the WDC is predicated upon the co-location of partner agencies, the specialization of different project partners, and the “functional integration” of agency staff, so that staff are situated in the building by function (e.g., job placement), and not by agency. However, although customers are encouraged to make use of all relevant services available in the Center, the realities of categorical program funding and accountability continue to reinforce the delivery of distinct services by each agency and a perspective within each participating program of concern about “*my statistics, my numbers, and my people.*” Thus, the current situation in the Waukesha County Workforce Development Center would more accurately be described as coordination, rather than integration of services.

One of the key issues surrounding this federal objective is what is perceived by local respondents as an unrealistic federal view of what integrated services should mean in a One-Stop system. This is an issue approached with both concern and trepidation. Local players voiced the concern that if the federal objective is “taken too far,” it could mean that the diversity in viewpoints and perspectives each of the partners brings to the One-Stop effort may be lost. Respondents also expressed a concern that integrated services may be inappropriately perceived as a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

Thus, for example, from the perspective of these local actors, it is not problematic that there are currently three agencies at the Center providing resume services. Although seemingly duplicative and not “integrated,” integration is not perceived as a valid objective in this instance “because it depends on the end user.” Individuals may need more intensive or less intensive services, so that importance is placed upon agency *coordination* with respect to resume services. It is believed that, in a customer-oriented service delivery system where the customer comes first and where vastly different populations receive a range of services, it should be possible to have different agencies providing similar services.

Thus, in actual practice, there appears to be a *continuum of integration*. Although there are some functional areas in which Center partners continue to operate similar or “parallel” activities (e.g., there are multiple procedures for intake, job listings, and job search/job placement services among the Center partners), in a number of functional areas, customers are referred to a project partner that specializes in these services. For example, three different levels of career assessments are available to a wide range of customers through WDC’s Community Career Center operated by the Technical College with support from multiple funding sources, and most customers use the automated JobNet listings maintained by Job Service (although the Technical College still operates its own job listing service for employers who prefer to use this system). Integration of services to “targeted populations” has been furthered by the use of a “joint RFP process” to contract for the delivery of services to JTPA, JOBS, and Food Stamp Employment and Training Program participants. (Once the contracts were awarded, however, the primary contractor established separate case management staff to serve the participants in JOBS versus JTPA programs.)

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Partner agencies agree that the local One-Stop system should be driven by customer feedback and continuous improvement. Local efforts to measure Center performance, however, are in their infancy. In terms of quantitative measures, notwithstanding individual program accountability requirements (e.g., placement rates for JTPA), partner agencies have difficulty even compiling “utilization” numbers for the Center as a whole. In addition, the local Center partners have not yet developed an approach to analyzing and using these data. A variety of efforts are underway to measure customer satisfaction using individual- and employer-focused surveys. Some

of these seek information on the customer response to specific services and activities, while others are more geared toward assessing the overall Center experience.

In general, however, local actors are struggling with performance measurement in a local One-Stop system that brings together numerous partners and populations with varying kinds and levels of expectations. Present efforts are concentrated on collecting data on numerous aspects of the Center's design and delivery of services. The recent formation of the *Data Collection Committee* is testimony to the growing awareness that information-gathering should be designed to capture useful information that can be used for continuous feedback and improvement.

Local One-Stop players believe that performance measurement within a One-Stop context should be predicated upon the ability to measure *system* performance (i.e., Center performance as a whole) and, ultimately, financial savings — a viewpoint also expressed by state-level actors. At the present time, however, different requirements for different programs are perceived as problematic. Local actors also voiced concerns about how performance data might be used to compare local areas that operate in very different contexts.

Physical Facilities

According to local actors, the building itself is important to the goals of the Center — “what it looks like, where it is, and how it's marketed.” Many factors were considered in selecting the site and designing the WDC. Chief among these were proximity to the interstate highway, accessibility to Waukesha County employers and residents, visibility, and a positive image. The Center was designed to meet the needs of all Center partners, with all design decisions based on consensus.

The Center has two main entrances. The Business Services Entrance, for employer customers, is staffed by an employee of the Economic Development Corporation. The entrance for individual customers is staffed by a Job Service employee. Neither entrance looks like the “back” of the building. This decision was based on the desire to make each type of customer feel comfortable and perceive that the Center was designed “for them.”

In addition to the reception areas, the building contains shared classroom space for training and group activities, a “Job Information Center,” which houses labor exchange information, a “Community Career Center,” which contains a variety of

career exploration tools, a child care facility for use by parents visiting the Center, space for employer interviews and seminars, common staff meeting rooms, a small lunchroom, and space jointly used for mailing, copying, and other administrative functions. Individual work stations are arranged on a *functional* basis so that staff from various agencies can work together on similar tasks. Although much attention has apparently been paid to detail (e.g, including attractive business-like furniture and decor and motivational quotations on wall decorations and computer “mouse” pads), it is generally agreed that space is somewhat tight. Partner agencies built a facility that met their current needs. Additional space was not provided to encourage expanded use by local agencies or programs not housed at the Center. Space limitations may become more of an issue in the future as the Center expands its menu of on-site services.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

More than 100 individuals staff the Workforce Development Center. Staff are situated in the building based upon function, so that “case management” staff are located in the same area, regardless of agency affiliation. One of the initial concerns for local partners was the fact that salary and benefit scales might be markedly different for individuals employed by separate agencies but working in a similar capacity at the Center. Although initially a source of concern for staff carrying out a given function, local respondents indicated that this issue “has receded a lot.” Despite the heightened awareness of different personnel policies, wages, and benefits, the morale among staff working at the Center is high due to the collaborative environment and the increased “community spirit” across partner agencies. One agency manager remarked that, “after staff come here, they don’t want to leave.”

Local actors believe that the WDC is a “listening and learning organization” that is in a state of evolution. It appears that local actors are building upon each other’s strengths so that, as remarked by one agency representative, “As a result of being aware of each other, we’re becoming more generalists in our awareness but more specialized in what we do.”

Capacity Building

Particular emphasis has been placed on the cross-training of all WDC staff in areas that include teambuilding, customer service, as well as technical training in information technologies. Many of these locally-initiated efforts took place *before* the

Center was operational. For example, prior to Center opening, two retreats were attended by all levels of partner agency staff. According to respondents, these were invaluable teambuilding experiences and, especially in the case of early efforts, helped to dispel a great deal of “agency baggage” concerning turf issues.

Although external trainers have been contracted in the past and are expected to be consulted in the future, in general, partner agencies currently rely on internal resources for capacity building and training needs. For instance, both before and after the Center was opened, staff from each of the partner agencies organized presentations and informational training sessions for the other agencies. These efforts facilitated the involvement of all levels of agency staff and allowed local actors to focus on similarities as well as areas of expertise. In addition, specialized training takes place, particularly involving the use of the technology available at the Center.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Coordination and consolidation of the information systems used by all partner agencies remains one of the most important local implementation challenges facing the WDC. Lead responsibility for projects relating to MIS development for the Center was assigned to the Private Industry Council. Projects identified as highest priority include: (1) systems to facilitate day-to-day communication among partner agencies; (2) development of a shared file of information on local employers; and (3) development of a shared system to capture information on individual participants.

To promote day-to-day communication among staff within the WDC, two initiatives have been undertaken. The first initiative was to establish a common electronic mail and on-line scheduling system (allowing all Center staff to access each others’ daily schedules and to reserve conference rooms) so staff could “act like and feel like one organization, or at least a number of organizations with the same goal.” The second initiative was to help agencies that used mainframe-based MIS systems equip all Center-based staff with PC’s that could both “emulate” dumb terminals to access their agency’s mainframe computer and give them access to the PC-based communications network within the Center.

To develop a common data base on employers, the Center undertook the development of a “comprehensive employer file.” This is an interactive, user-friendly, PC-based system that tracks all contacts with area employers. System design, which took into account individual agency needs, took approximately one year and was

completed before the Center was operational. Information on employers can be printed based upon several options, including, for example, all employers contacted within a specific timeframe or by a particular agency staff. The system is believed to be essential in supporting coordination of employer contacts among Center partners. With the help of this system, the partner agencies have established an informal “account” system, with a single Center staff assigned as the official “account representative” for each employer.

The area with which local actors have struggled the most is how to collect or share common information about individual program participants. Currently still in the planning stage, a shared information system is under development that would capture basic information on participant demographics and services received in a user-friendly, menu-driven manner. Initial registration in the system would be accomplished by customers who would be able to peruse an on-line menu of service offerings and indicate interest in specific services using PCs installed in the lobby.

Center partners are not attempting to design a common MIS system that would replace their own individual record-keeping requirements. Individual agency MIS requirements are perceived to be too diverse to consolidate. For example, one agency requires 24 different screens of participant information, whereas another requires 5 screens. Instead, the Center is developing a tracking system to capture a few “core” measures that different programs collect in common and that could be used to generate broad statistics about participants and the services they use. Each participating partner is expected to collect additional data based on its own reporting requirements. Local actors believe this to be the most prudent approach until federal and state reporting requirements are integrated across programs.

Labor Market Information and Related Improvements

The WDC has integrated the state’s automated labor market information tools (JobNet and Career Visions) into two staffed labor market information centers within the Center. Labor Market Information is available through the WDC’s “Job Information Center” (JIC) and “Community Career Center” (CCC). The JIC currently contains 12 terminals for individuals interested in searching on-line for a local, state, or national job through *JobNet*, the state’s on-line job posting/labor exchange system. The Job Information Center also contains a number of publications with labor market information in print format as well, including state-developed occupational and wage

surveys tailored to specific regions. WDC staff are available to assist customers in accessing labor market information. In addition, a state-employed labor market analyst works at the Center one day per week.

The CCC has the look and feel of a library and is home to a bank of PC's on which individuals can use *Career Visions*, the state's on-line career exploration system, in addition to variety of additional software, some on CD-ROM with both video and sound capability. There are also numerous career and occupational reference books, some of which are geared for specific populations (e.g., youth); information on four-year colleges; and over 100 videotapes on various occupations. Also available is an on-line program that customers can use to access information about the performance of Technical College programs (including wage rates of graduates and placement rates). At least one staff person is always available to serve walk-in customers. Because the materials at the CCC are continually expanding, a current priority is the development of an inventory that can be used by internal staff and distributed to local schools.

Automated labor market information is also available to customers from a distance using Internet linkages. The feasibility of cable linkages to schools are also being explored as a way to make the resources of the Center available to a broader audience.

Marketing

Marketing efforts at the Center are guided by a multi-agency Marketing Committee. Based on the local One-Stop implementation grant, the marketing budget for the WOW SDA is \$41,000, of which Waukesha County receives 78%. This does not include, however, efforts initiated by specific partner agencies that support local efforts (e.g., this budget does not include the marketing budget for the Technical College).

Marketing was relatively low-key before and shortly after the Center was opened, reflecting local partners' caution and perhaps uncertainty about the level of demand for Center services. Initial priorities included the development of a logo for the Center that was acceptable to all partners. Local actors believed it was important for all staff to be able to distribute business cards portraying a single identity when the Center officially opened. *The Workforce Development Center: Where People and Jobs Connect* is prominently displayed throughout the Center, as well as included on stationery and "badges" that are worn by all staff. In addition to the logo, initial

marketing priorities included the development of a brochure and a videotape describing the Center in the words of key staff from all partner agencies.

To date, marketing efforts have been broad-based and focused on both individuals and employers. This reflects, in part, the newness of the Center and the need to establish some kind of foundation within the county. However, there have also been some targeted efforts, many of which have been both resourceful and positive in outcome. When the Center opened, for instance, partner agencies used the Center's letterhead to contact all area Chambers of Commerce in writing to solicit input and ideas pertaining to a flag for the Center. This generated a number of questions about the Center, which was part of the original intent.

It is expected that marketing efforts will be more specialized and focused during the first half of 1996, with 75% of WDC marketing funds being targeted to individual job seekers. Local actors are poised for a media campaign that will include billboard and mail advertising, Career Expos, job fairs, on-site recruitment, and the sponsorship of Center tours. The substantial increase in marketing activity is driven by the severe labor shortage in Waukesha County and the consequent need to recruit individual job seekers. However, it is also the case that the partner agencies have now established a track record working together and are more comfortable promoting the Center and its services.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The Workforce Development Center offers a broad range of on-site services to individual customers. Service coordination, as well as the initiation of new services is the responsibility of the multi-agency *Integrated Services to Job Seekers Committee*. Services currently available to all job seeker/worker customers include:

- *Computerized listings of local, state, and national job openings and other labor market information*, provided through the Center's Job Information Center, staffed by the Wisconsin Job Service (described in the section on Labor Market Information and Related Improvements).
- *Career information, including information about occupations and training resources and information about the performance of specific programs*, provided through the Center's Community Career Center, staffed by the Technical College.

- *Assessment and interpretation of basic educational skills, vocational interests, and occupational aptitudes*, provided through the Center's Community Career Center. As the agreed-upon partner responsible for assessment services (selected through a joint RFP process), the Technical College offers three different levels of assessment to different customer groups including the general population, JTPA clients, JOBS clients, and at-risk youth.
- *On-site child care*, staffed by the local YWCA and funded through a subcontract with one of the service provider partners at the Center, available to Center customers for up to 2.5 hours at a time.
- *Job placement and job search assistance*, which is available through a number of different agencies and programs, including Job Service, the Technical College System, and contracted providers for individuals enrolled in categorical programs, such as JOBS and JTPA. The level of assistance and the intensity of these services vary substantially from source to source. Each provider makes an effort to share its resources with other agencies on a space available basis.
- *Information and referral to other needed service*, through distribution of information about services available from other community agencies.

Services available to individual job seekers based on their eligibility for special program funding include:

- *Financial assistance*, provided on-site by staff from the Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services to "able-bodied" residents eligible for AFDC, medical assistance, and/or Food Stamps.
- *Education or job training/retraining support and assistance*, available to individuals eligible for the JTPA or JOBS programs through contracted service providers housed at the Center, through the Technical College, or through other community educational institutions.
- *Veterans' services*, including job counseling and assistance available from special veterans' staff within the Job Service.
- *Case management services*, available to individuals enrolled in categorical education and training programs such as JTPA and JOBS.

Individual Center customers are informed about the range of available services upon arrival to the WDC. Local actors believe that the menu and quality of individual services are continuing to improve and evolve within the One-Stop context. One area that holds much potential, for instance, is collaboration of Center partners in the design and delivery of various on-site workshops. For instance, local partners recently designed an evening workshop for students and their parents on career planning, based

on the belief that parents are the primary influence on students' career planning. Called "Parents-as-Partners," this workshop has received high praise, and there are currently waiting lists to attend. These and other locally-developed workshops and seminars appear to hold great promise for the future of the Center.

Local actors would like to view each individual seeking services at the Center as a "customer" without regard to eligibility for a particular program. The reality of specific funding streams for specific populations, in addition to shrinking funds in general, has made this viewpoint appear somewhat unrealistic, however, so that providing comprehensive services to the general public has emerged as a key issue. Although various short-term options have been exploited (e.g., not precluding individuals from attending on-site workshops for targeted groups when space is available), local actors are exploring the possibility of fee-for-service arrangements as a longer-term response. Currently, the only fee-based service for individuals at the Center is resume preparation. During 1996, partner agencies plan to survey individuals receiving services from the Center regarding the price at which they would be willing to pay for specific services.

Services for Employer Customers

Several committees guide the development and delivery of the Center's services for employer customers, most notably the *Integrated Services to Employers Steering Committee*, comprised of partner agency representatives that meet regularly, and the *Employer Advisory Committee*, comprised chiefly of representatives from area employers, which currently meets on a quarterly basis and which provides a structured forum for employer input and feedback.

Although including the Economic Development Corporation as a key partner has clearly enhanced the Center's legitimacy and credibility with area employers, local actors believe that a "multi-directional approach" is crucial to overcoming what is perceived as "the employer perception of the welfare stereotype." One-Stop actors have seized upon various opportunities to broaden the image of the Center, including sponsoring employer seminars on topics of significant interest (e.g., the current labor shortage and workforce diversity). Additional efforts include acting as a liaison between area businesses and schools, facilitating the recruitment of individuals interested in apprenticeships and similar arrangements, conducting employer needs

analyses and developing training around those needs and, in general, cultivating an “identity” for the Center within the business community.

Local One-Stop actors believe that employer services offer many opportunities for the Center, and services continue to evolve. Key partners involved in the delivery of services to employers include Job Service and the Technical College’s Center for Business and Industry. At present, the WDC offers:

- *A range of recruitment services*, currently the most popular service with employers. Recruitment services available to employers include job order services, applicant referrals, assessment of job applicants, participation in job fairs, participation in internship programs, and access to national job listings. Currently, employers can “list” job orders by using the Job Service’s on-line, labor exchange system (*JobNet*) and/or using the Technical College’s system, also on site. Employers are encouraged to use both. Although seemingly duplicative, partner agencies realized that employers may have had negative past experiences with the Job Service and/or positive experiences with the Technical College, and wanted to offer employers a choice. Moreover, employers that are seeking graduates with specific credentials may use the system offered by the Technical College for this reason as well.
- *Technical assistance and a variety of employer-oriented workforce development services*, including business relocation/expansion assistance, outplacement services, business needs analysis, labor market information, information about linkages with school districts, tours and presentations, and coordination of youth apprenticeships.
- *Workforce training services*, including customized training, on- or off-site workshops, seminars and skills upgrading.

Through the Economic Development Corporation, the Center also offers various forms of financial support to local businesses, including assistance obtaining economic development financing and business loans.

Many of the Center’s business services are fee-based, most notably customized training and consulting services. In fact, customized training on TQM is currently one of the most popular services. Local actors are eager to further explore fee-for-services arrangements. Several employer focus groups have been conducted to assess employer needs and willingness to pay for specific services. Feedback indicates that area employers are especially interested in paying for the screening of prospective employees.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

In addition to brief and informal conversations with Center users during the evaluation site visit, a focus group was held with individuals currently participating in activities and services at the Workforce Development Center. Focus group participants varied in terms of demographic characteristics, program eligibility, as well as the services that they were receiving. Customer response to the Center and its services was overwhelmingly positive. It was believed that the difference between the WDC and “traditional” services was quite pronounced, like “night and day.”

Focus group participants recounted past experiences working with different agencies in different environments. The Workforce Development Center was a clearly different paradigm. It was mentioned that even the layout and the professionalism of the environment was “full of hope instead of despair.” One young woman recounted her experiences with traditional “human services agencies,” stating that “...you walked in and you were a criminal and you were a jerk. Here they treat you with respect....The receptionist doesn’t care why you’re here. They’re there to help you.” Similarly, a middle-aged man who was an airline pilot teaching individuals to fly was using the Center to find a part-time job because business was slow in the winter. He reiterated the theme that “the old systems aren’t working,” mentioning that he had familiarity with “other government offices like Social Security offices and welfare offices.” “This is different. The people are professional. It’s a positive environment. I’m very impressed.”

The access to multiple resources was viewed as especially important. For instance, one woman in her mid-20’s with four children originally came to the Center to apply for AFDC. She stated that “Every *one* and every *thing* was out here. You can get in touch with all these agencies, and it worked out real well for me.” This individual is currently completing a non-traditional training program in plumbing and is also attending an on-site job-seeking workshop. Many participants also stated that they liked the self-directedness of the Center and the ability to use various equipment at their own convenience. This was the case for one focus group participant who was a veteran about to lose his long-held job at a major area employer. He came to the Center looking for job information and was introduced to the on-line *JobNet* labor exchange information system. Although uncomfortable at first with the technology, he currently feels proficient and at ease. The major benefits to him include the fact that

no “intermediary” is necessary, although he felt more comfortable knowing that staff would be available to assist, stating that “They bend over backwards for you and give you excellent information.” The fact that the Center offered evening and weekend hours was also perceived as important.

Although self-directed activities and services were clearly viewed as important, it was also believed that there was no substitute for face-to-face interaction. Human contact was wanted and needed, especially by a few of the participants who unequivocally stated that their case manager was “key” for them. The experience of one participant is a case in point. In his late 30’s, this man was an ex-offender who came to the WDC to apply for General Assistance. He recounted “horror” stories of working with another non-partner agency for almost a year, following “dead-end job leads” and being required to participate in months of testing that was perceived as repetitive and a waste of time. He didn’t expect the support and assistance he received at the WDC. It was clear to him that his WDC case manager was a strong advocate, even driving him to meetings with his parole officer and encouraging him to make use of his degree in business and explore job leads via the *JobNet*. In another case, a young woman credited her case manager as helping her achieve her GED, “see past the obstacles” and receive computer and office skills training. She had a job interview scheduled the following day and stated, “I don’t know what I would have done without her guidance.”

Employers

Employer feedback regarding WDC services and activities was garnered through both an individual meeting, as well as through the perusal of a videotaped employer focus group that was conducted the week prior to the on-site visit. The response to the Center, as well as its services, was very positive. The WDC was considered to be a professional environment offering professional services, which was clearly a departure from what employers were accustomed to based either on past experience or stereotypical understandings.

In terms of specific services, respondents praised both the training programs sponsored by the WDC as well as recruitment services. One employer opined that “the nicest thing is the ordering. You can put in a job order and it goes everywhere. We’ve had great luck with getting people.” In another case, a Human Resources Manager from a major national retailer stated that her company recently added a

second shift and needed more than 100 employees within a short period of time. Although difficult, especially considering the current labor shortage, she said that when she approached Center staff and discussed her needs, “It was never a matter of ‘I don’t think we can do it.’ It was ‘Let’s talk about *how* we can do it’.”

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN

Notwithstanding the key factors discussed early in this Profile — the local economy, the proposed reduction in the number of local planning units, and the expected changes associated with block grants — there are several local-level factors that have influenced local One-Stop design and implementation. The broad range of partner agencies involved in the WDC, for instance, has facilitated local efforts to create a more comprehensive workforce development service delivery system. In terms of specific partners, the inclusion of the Economic Development Corporation has influenced the Center’s reputation within the business community, and the inclusion of Partners for Education helps maintain a focus on youth and educational issues. In addition, the involvement of all layers of partner agency staff in the development of the local design has been a dramatic influence on local implementation. The many opportunities to work together *before* the Center was operational were invaluable experiences in terms of building trust, rapport, and hashing out issues before the Center was opened.

State-level influences on local One-Stop design and implementation include an extended history of state efforts to encourage coordinated workforce development planning and service delivery across local agencies and programs. State attempts to influence local One-Stop efforts began several years ago with the requirement for the development of local plans called Core Coordination Documents. More recently, the state developed Job Center Standards and allocated One-Stop implementation grant funds to local areas to be used to further the achievement of these standards. Although proud that they are perceived as early pioneers of the state’s Job Center initiative, WDC staff view the bureaucracy associated with statewide implementation of the Job Center model with some concern. Local staff perceive that, while their early experiences helped lead to the development of the state’s Job Center Standards, the standards themselves may not be flexible enough to capture the uniqueness of each local One-Stop site. State-level design work and infrastructure investments have also shaped the local use of information technology products such as JobNet and Career Visions. Whatever form of the proposed welfare reform package passes the state

legislature will also be an important influence on the services available through the WDC in the future.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

It is clear that the Waukesha County Workforce Development Center has made significant strides in creating a customer-oriented, comprehensive service delivery system. Meaningful collaborative relationships across numerous local partners have enabled local One-Stop actors to move forward toward the achievement of a common mission in which all partners can add value to the effort and “feed off of each other.” The experience of the WDC may be somewhat unique, however, in that the Center is a new facility, jointly designed and managed by the partner agencies. It is likely that that entire experience had a catalyzing effect on agency partnerships. Key lessons learned include the tangible benefits resulting from the involvement of all levels of staff from a broad range of local partner agencies, in addition to the importance of continued cross-training and teambuilding efforts.